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SIPDIS
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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ETRD](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: USDA SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL AVIAN INFLUENZA DIAGNOSTIC
WORKSHOPS FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA ECONOMIES HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH
TAIWAN AUTHORITIES.

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

1.(SBU) SUMMARY. From May 07 - 18 and June 04 - 15, 2007, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) co-sponsored with Taiwan two International Avian Influenza Diagnostic Workshops targeting the lesser developed economies of Southeast Asia (SEA). The two Workshops increased Taiwan's exposure to the international community, particularly in Southeast Asia, allowing them to make new contacts and share common animal health/animal disease experiences. This is especially important in light of the recent events which transpired during the last session of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) in Paris, where Taiwan felt its status was downgraded. The USDA AI Workshops were held in conjunction with Taiwan's Council of Agriculture (COA), Animal Health Research Institute (AHRI) at their state of the art facilities. Taiwan contributed many resources, including free use of lab facilities, dormitory space, and technical staff, to support the USDA Avian Influenza effort. Fifty diagnosticians from various SEA economies received the training. End Summary.

12. (SBU) USDA, through its International Avian Influenza Coordination Group, supports numerous Avian Influenza capacity building and infrastructure development initiatives and projects throughout the lesser developed world. Through USDA's APHIS and FAS offices at AIT, the Coordination Group was able to identify Taiwan as an ideal partner to focus delivery of AI laboratory diagnostic techniques in virology/serology and molecular biology to the lesser developed economies of Southeast Asia (SEA). Originally, only one diagnostic course was scheduled in Taiwan, but due to overwhelming need for AI diagnostics in SEA, a second course was added to meet demand.

13. (SBU) One important benefit of the Workshop was the international exposure it brought for Taiwan, allowing Taiwan officials to make new contacts in the region, and share common experiences in combating animal diseases and addressing animal health concerns. This is especially important in light of recently transpired events at the last session of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), where Taiwan's membership status in this organization was, in their eyes, downgraded. It also allowed for Taiwan to make a valuable contribution to the international

community and the region by sharing its expertise and technical resources with its lesser developed neighbors, while working alongside the United States.

¶4. (SBU) A total of fifty diagnosticians from eight SEA economies, including Taiwan, participated in the two Workshops. Economies which participated were: Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Two other economies, Myanmar and Bangladesh, were also invited to attend the Workshops, but citing adherence to a "one China policy" withdrew their participation.

¶5. (SBU) While USDA supplied expert training staff and travel funds to the selected SEA participants, Taiwan contributed free use of their state of the art laboratory facilities and lecture hall as a venue for the Workshops. This included use of dormitory rooms for the SEA participants at no charge. Additional Taiwan support included the use of AHRI lab technicians to assist the USDA training staff during instruction. The APHIS office at AIT provided local and international/regional coordination and logistical support, procurement, and local budget management for both Workshops.

¶6. (SBU) Comment: By all accounts, the Workshops have been deemed successful, confirmed through written feedback surveys from the participants, the experiences relayed by the USDA instructors, and responses from the Taiwan Authorities, including both COA and AHRI officials. Plans for continued technical collaboration are underway between USDA, APHIS and COA, through its Bureau of Animal and Plant Health Inspection and Quarantine (BAPHIQ) and the Animal Technology

Institute of Taiwan (ATIT). Subject matter experts from APHIS' Center for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH) have agreed to conduct an Epidemiology Course for Taiwan candidates during October ¶2007. Additional, future technical cooperation and collaboration projects are being considered by both USDA and COA for 2008 and beyond.
End Comment.

YOUNG